

VZCZCXRO6240
PP RUEHDE
DE RUEHRH #1920 0800903
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 210903Z MAR 06
FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5364
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 2513
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0467

C O N F I D E N T I A L RIYADH 001920

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DHAHRAN SENDS
PARIS FOR ZEYA, LONDON FOR TSOU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/20/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KMPI](#) [KIRF](#) [KPAO](#) [SA](#)
SUBJECT: 'CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY' IS OFF-LIMITS FOR A
SAUDI JOURNALIST

Classified By: Consul General John Kincannon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Nawal Al Yousif (protect), a Shi'a journalist and founder of [www.saudiya.net](#), noted in a meeting with the PAO on March 17, 2006 that mentioning a constitutional democracy in her writing crossed a red line with the Saudi Ministry of Interior. "The Mubahith (Investigative Police) came to see me, and said I could continue to write about women's rights, human rights and about the Shi'a," Ms. Al Yousif explained, "but told me not to write about the need for a constitutional democracy." Ms. Al Yousif's website remains accessible in Saudi Arabia. In response to this guidance, she no longer refers to constitutional democracy, but writes regularly about women's, human, and religious rights.

¶2. (SBU) Bionote: Nawal Al Yousif is a journalist from Seihat, a village near the oasis town of Qatif. After writing for the Eastern Province regional newspaper Al Yaum for several years, she resigned in 2003. Unable to find a permanent job, she decided in November 2005 to launch her own website. Since then [www.saudiya.net](#) has had over 275,000 hits. End bionote.

(APPROVED: KINCANNON)
OBERWETTER